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ABSTRACT

A study involving 238 fourth grade pupils was conducted to determine whether a relationship exists between the use of instruction with masked materials and pupils' word recognition and comprehension. The pupils were placed into either an experimental or a control group. Each group was administered a pretest to measure reading rate, to insure that all subjects could read and comprehend at or above the second grade level, and to make comparisons with posttest performance. The control group took the posttest, consisting of a 100-word passage in which every fifth word had been masked and a comprehension test, immediately. The experimental group first participated in the treatment, which consisted of the entire group working together to figure out what the masked words were in a passage and discussing how they made their decisions, then took the posttest. It was found that subjects in the experimental group showed significantly higher mean scores on both the masked and comprehension posttests, that subjects with greater reading speed showed significantly higher means on the masked posttest than those who read more slowly, that the pretest had significant predictive value on both posttests, and that socioeconomic status had a significant effect on comprehension posttest scores but not on masked posttest scores. (TJ)

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Use of Masked Materials to Develop Insights in Word Attack and Reading Comprehension

Marjorie Klein Bernath

Reading is the process of discovering meaning in written language. Therefore, the teaching of reading to boys and girls is of paramount importance in our schools. Each decade witnesses a reaffirmation of the need to improve the methods employed by teachers and the materials they use to increase teachers' ability to teach and pupils' ability to learn to read.

The dedicated efforts of researchers, teachers, and reading specialists have resulted in sound instruction in reading emphasizing decoding skills and comprehension skills.

Still a serious problem faces the nation. Measurements of reading achievement of pupils reveal a large percentage of pupils who fail to read at a level which enables them to function as independent members of a literate society.

Background of the Problem

The new field of psycholinguistics has introduced three controversial insights into the reading process:

1. Only a small part of the information necessary for reading comprehension comes from the printed page.
2. Comprehension must precede the identification of individual words.
3. Reading is not decoding to spoken language. (Smith, 1973)

These theorists define reading as a psycholinguistic process by which the reader reconstructs a message which has been

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encoded by a writer. Kenneth Goodman applied psycholinguistic universals in the reading process in describing the fluent reader: acquisition of speech is through development and testing of hypotheses about language; written language acquisition is parallel to speech acquisition (Goodman, 1970).

Meaning originates in the mind of the reader. The reader uses only as much visual information as he requires to confirm a prediction. He samples, relying on the redundancy of the language, his background experiences, and his knowledge of linguistic constraints. He predicts structures, tests them against semantic content, and confirms or rejects as he further processes language. He uses three cue systems at once: graphophonic, syntactic, and semantic. The working memory is so constrained that we could not possibly comprehend speech or writing if we analyzed individual words. Goodman (1970) emphasizes that fluent readers are able to use syntactic and semantic cues to such a great extent that they need only minimal graphic cues in many cases.

While readers usually make an automatic transition to this level of fluency, children becoming fluent readers can benefit from direct, planned sequential experiences geared toward developing awareness and use of context, structure, and configuration clues. Early and successful acquisition of these skills becomes doubtful when left to chance.

The language behavior of the fluent reader requires the very skills a reader must employ when reading cloze or masked materials. The cloze technique provides the reader with

syntactic and semantic information. Wilson Taylor (1953) likened the process individuals go through in filling in a cloze blank to the process of closure in Gestalt psychology. He defined a cloze unit as any single occurrence of a successful attempt to reproduce accurately a part deleted from a message by deciding from the context that remains what the missing part should be.

Agreement now exists as to the accepted methodology of cloze test construction though many variations are being employed in research. A deletion system of every fifth word with standard blank length has been accepted. Reliability coefficients are highest when cloze passages consist of at least 250 words. Scoring tests by exact word replacements is the most valid method and eliminates any subjective judgment on the part of the examiner. Raw scores are converted to percentage scores to facilitate comparisions among passages of different lengths. A cloze test score of 44% has been found comparable to 75% on a multiple choice test over the same material, and 57% cloze is comparable to 90% multiple choice. Cloze scores of 44-57% indicate instructional reading level and 57% and above indicate independent level (Bormuth, 1968).

While cloze procedure has generally been administered by having the subjects read a deleted passage silently and write a free response for each blank, there are many advocates of a modified cloze procedure. Porter (1976) suggests the marriage of cloze procedure to the multiple choice test, giving the exact deletion and three distractors. Other researchers have employed a section of exact deletions and paired distractors

following full or partial passages. Partial cloze (as p____w) is occasionally used (Samuels, 1974). Some studies, especially with primary subjects, have used oral responses.

The masked technique employed in this research attempted to add visual features (initial letters of undistinguished configuration and word configuration) to the cloze form to enhance that important and natural dimension for processing.

The cloze procedure and the application of psycholinguistics to the reading process emerged coincidentally twenty years ago. In this study the two were brought together in a teaching program. The materials and discussion technique used in this study were designed to heighten the reader's awareness of syntax, semantics, and graphophonics to improve word recognition and comprehension.

Purpose of the Study

This study attempted to determine the effectiveness of the experimental treatment in increasing the subjects' ability to use redundancy in language by having the subjects identify and verbalize the many clues in context to unlock masked words.

Hypotheses

The following research hypothesis was tested: Is there a relationship between the use of instruction with masked materials and pupils' word recognition and comprehension? The statistical hypotheses considered and discussed in relation to the research hypothesis were:

1. Controlling for other variables, the experimental treatment will increase posttest scores; the experimental treatment will increase both word attack and comprehension.

2. Greater speeds in reading will be associated with higher posttest scores.

3. Higher pretest scores will increase posttest scores.

4. Higher chronological age will increase posttest scores.

5. Higher socio-economic ratio will be associated with higher posttest scores.

6. Sex of the subject will not affect posttest scores.

Definition of Terms

Comprehension in this study will be limited to the ability to answer literal questions about the content read.

A cloze exercise is a passage with deletion of every n^{th} word or every word of a particular class.

A masked word is a word which has been completely or partially blocked out.

A fluent reader is a person who makes optimal use of all the redundancy in a piece of text (Smith, 1971, p. 220).

An intact group is a regular classroom.

Methodology and Procedure

Research Design

The Pretest-Posttest Control Group Design (Campbell & Stanley, 1963) in which equivalent groups are achieved by randomization was employed in this study.

Variables

The independent variable was the experimental treatment (see Appendix A). Subjects hypothesized a word in context hidden under a flap. Subjects were guided to identify clues, such as context clues (synonym, familiar expression, experience, comparison, definition, and summary) and syntax clues (pattern of words, relationships, general grammar, and noun, verb, phrase, and clause markers). The subjects then tested their hypotheses by comparing their word with the configuration, initial letter, and length of the masked word.

The other independent variables were the pretest, time measured and recorded on the pretest (in increments from thirty seconds to three minutes thirty seconds), age spanning eight to ten years old, sex, and socio-economic level.

Instruments

Based on cloze research, instruments were constructed for this study (see Appendix A). In the posttest, fifth word mutilation was employed in a passage of 100 words. Only exact word replacements were scored correct. The cloze procedure was modified to mask or block out letters rather than complete deletion. The masking criteria adopted was to block out all letters in the target word except initial lower case letters of undistinguished configuration (a, o, s, and w in the initial position in the 20 target words). Eight multiple choice questions on passage content were used to evaluate comprehension.

The pretest was composed of an unmasked passage of the same length (10) words) and eight questions in the same form.

The charted experimental exercise of fifteen sentences was constructed. Each sentence had one or more masked words. Five sentences each focussed attention on use of context, syntax, and configuration, respectively.

This design was preceded by two pilot studies done in the Fall of 1976 (27 pupils) and in the Spring of 1977 (93 pupils). Second and third grade pupils participated in the action research/pilot studies. Encouraging results were obtained which led to refinements in choice of grade level of subjects, pupil materials, masking criteria, chart construction for the experimental lesson, method of recording the independent variable, and method of random assignment.

Subjects

The subjects in this study were 238 first semester fourth grade pupils assigned to nine intact classrooms. Pupils in each intact group were randomly assigned to the experimental or control group by the drawing of straws. Randomizing the groups in this manner permitted maximum internal validity. The subjects included 121 boys and 117 girls. They ranged in age from eight to ten years old with an average age of 9.2 years.

Procedure and Data Collection

The experimental group numbered 121 subjects. The control group numbered 117 subjects. A pretest (see Appendix A) was administered to measure rate of reading, to insure that all

subjects included in the study could read and comprehend at or above the second grade level, and to make comparisons with performance on the posttests.

In each intact group (classroom) all pupils took the same pretest at the same time. The pretest (variable 6) was a passage of about 100 words. The time taken to read the passage (variable 5) was recorded on the test form. The subject then answered eight multiple choice literal comprehension questions on the passage read.

The pupils were dismissed for a 20 minute recess. Reentering the room, they drew straws which assigned each student to within the experimental or control group. The control group immediately took the posttest (see Appendix A). The posttest was a passage of about 100 words. One in five words was masked (blocked out so that only configuration, length, and initial lower case letters of undistinguished configuration -- a, o, s, w --were visible). Pupils were instructed, "This is a story like the one you read earlier, but some of the words have been blacked out. Read the story the best you can. When you come to a blacked out word, write what you think it is in the space above it. Write one word for each masked word" (variable 7). "Try every one. Don't be afraid to guess. Wrong spelling will not count against you. Try to use the best word for each masked word. Answer the eight (unmasked) multiple choice comprehension questions" (variable 8).

Both control (posttested prior) group and experimental group participated in the experimental treatment. The

experimental treatment (one 30 minute session) consisted of the group unlocking masked words in sentences. The drill (see Appendix A) was divided into three sections with emphasis on context clues, syntax clues, and configuration. The group discussed their reasons and clues used in figuring out the masked words. Discussion questions used by the researcher were:

1. What do you think the hidden word is?
2. What does the sentence mean with your word?
3. Does the sentence made sense?
4. What word or words in the sentence gave you a clue?
5. What class of word is needed? Does the word have to be a person, place, or thing; do we need a doing word, a modifier, a phrase marker?

When the pupils had decided what they each thought the hidden word was, the flap was lifted so they could compare their guess with the initial letter and configuration of the masked word.

Following the treatment the experimental group took the same posttest the control group took prior to the treatment. Responses on the masked posttest were scored as correct in the case of exact replacement only.

Subjects marked their test form "B" for boy or "G" for girl. Subjects wrote their age and birthday on the test form. Subjects recorded the number of minutes and seconds taken to read the pretest on their test form. This was checked by the experimenter circulating among the subjects. The percentage of pupils on the federal free lunch program was obtained.

In the event a subject responded correctly to fewer than half of the pretest comprehension questions (indicating severe reading disability or lack of fluency in English) that subject's test results were excluded.

Methodological Assumptions

In this study, the following basic assumptions were made:

1. Students in regular classrooms have a wide variety of intellectual abilities within the "normal" range.

2. Subjects' reading abilities reflect having been exposed to a variety of reading approaches as a result of the Preferred Reading Programs option of this school district.

3. The literature shows that pupils in a given grade level vary in ability to read; that there is variability from class to class and school to school. This is further born out by annual district wide published test results.

4. Since students are usually assigned to classrooms on a random basis, variability in home background, native language, and other factors will also be randomly distributed among the experimental and control groups.

Limitations

The results can only be generalized to pupils in the first semester of fourth grade. The subjects in this study represent a variety of ethnic groups and varied socio-economic levels of a large suburban area.

The materials were chosen for readability. Three additional comprehension questions per passage were constructed for

more complete data. These added questions may not conform precisely to the readability formula level. This applied equally to the experimental and control groups.

As the theoretical base implies a natural transition to mature fluency, maturation may affect test scores taken over a period of several months. However, maturation affected experimental and control groups equally.

Subjects comprised of intact groups--fourth graders in classrooms to which the experimenter was assigned as a day-to-day substitute teacher. Random assignment was employed within each intact group. In using intact groups, sampling error is a possibility. The large size of the sample was intended to overcome sampling error.

Findings and Analysis

Descriptive statistics were computed for the control group and the treatment group producing means, standard deviation, and differences in means for variables two through six (sex, age, socio-economic ratio, time, and pretest, respectively), to determine if the groups were essentially the same (from the same population) prior to treatment.

The same statistical procedure was followed in order to compare the effect of treatment and no-treatment on variables seven and eight (masked and comprehension posttest scores, respectively).

Linear regression was used to produce estimated coefficients and t ratios to observe the separate effects of each variable one through six (treatment, age, socio-economic ratio, time, and pretest, respectively) on posttest performance, holding all other variables constant.

The .01 level of significance was selected for rejection in reporting results in all the above prediction.

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics related to characteristics of the treatment and no-treatment groups. In the right most column is the t statistic associated with testing for differences between the means. In this case, as the respective sample sizes are 117 and 121, the t distribution has 236 degrees of freedom. The critical values for a two-tailed, five percent test are ± 1.96. For a two-tailed, one percent test, they are ± 2.58.

As can be seen in Table 1, there was no significant difference between the no-treatment (control) group and the treatment group in variables two, three, four, and six (sex, age, socio-economic ratio, and pretest, respectively). This was as would be expected due to random assignment to groups as described in Procedure and Data Collection.

Variable five is a measure of the time taken by subjects to read the pretest passage. The difference between the groups was statistically significant at the .05 level. The t value suggests caution as there exists the possibility that among the no-treatment group were somewhat slower readers (means differed by .21). Speed of reading may reflect one aspect of

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics on Characteristics

of No-Treatment and Treatment Groups

Variable	V1 No-Treatment N = 117		V1 Treatment N = 121		t Value for differences in means
	Means	Standard Deviation	Means	Standard Deviation	
V2: Sex % male	.4786	.5017	.4876	.5019	.1383
V3: Age in years	9.2094	.5053	9.2107	.5113	.0197
V4: Socio-economic ratio	.2273	.1462	.2309	.1538	.1849
V5: Time in 15 second intervals to read pretest	1.1453	.7134	.9339	.6088	-2.4639
V6: Comprehension pretest score	7.3590	.9601	7.4463	.9912	.6896

intelligence, leading one to infer the groups may differ slightly in this aspect.

Variable six (score on the pretest) may similarly be seen as crude measure of verbal intelligence. Here no significant difference was found between the groups; thus, the effect of any possible difference in speed of reading (variable five) was, therefore, not reflected in pretest passage comprehension (variable six).

Dependent Variables

Table 2 presents descriptive statistics for the dependent variables. Variable seven is the score out of 20 possible on a posttest in which subjects wrote in a word for every masked fifth word in a passage. Variable eight is the score out of eight possible on a multiple choice posttest measuring comprehension of the same passage. The treatment group scored significantly higher on the masked posttest. The observed t value for the difference between the means is 6.18, substantially greater than the one-tailed, one percent critical value of 2.33. Similarly, the observed difference for the comprehension posttest produced a t value (3.47) greater than the one percent critical value.

It is interesting to note that the experimental treatment produced an homogenizing effect on posttest scores. In both cases the estimated standard deviation of the non-treatment group was significantly greater than that of the treatment group. The F-ratios were 2.02 and 1.74 for the masked and comprehension posttest respectively. The one percent critical

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics on the Dependent Variables

Variable	V1 No-Treatment N = 117		V1 Treatment N = 121		t Value for differences in means
	Means	Standard Deviation	Means	Standard Deviation	
V7: Masked posttest score	12.9915	4.4981	16.0992	3.1660	6.1780*
V8: Comprehension posttest Score	5.7094	2.3491	6.6446	1.7789	3.4686*

* Significant at the .01 level.

value is approximately 1.53. This effect may be explained by the fact that in replacing masked words the treatment group used insights gained in the experimental treatment (making use of context clues, grammatical clues, initial letters, and configuration), whereas the methods used by the control group are unknown to us and may have been a variety of techniques including trial and error, random guessing, and omission.

Based on Table 1, it is reasonable to conclude that with the exception of the time variable, the treatment group and the no-treatment group were not significantly different prior to the administration of the experimental teaching procedure. Table 2, however, suggests that the procedure enhanced insight in word attack and comprehension. The differences between the two groups on the posttests scores are substantial.

However, the differences in reading rate (variable five) confounds the results, making it difficult to determine whether or not the posttest differences are due to treatment or reading speed. To overcome this potential difficulty, regression analysis was used to isolate the effect of the treatment holding constant the effect of all the variables, including reading speed.

Regression Analysis

Table 3 presents a regression analysis providing additional evidence of the effects of each of the variables on posttest scores. Regression I shows the estimated regression relationships between masked posttest scores and treatment (exposure to

Table 3

Predictive Value of Variables on Posttest Scores

Variables	Regression I Dependent Variable 7 Masked Posttest Score		Regression II Dependent Variable 8 Comprehension Posttest Score	
	Estimated Coefficents	t Ratios	Estimated Coefficents	t Ratios
V1: Treatment	2.635	6.02*	.863	3.56*
V2: Sex	.345	.80	.084	.35
V3: Age	.768	1.78	-.101	.42
V4: Socio-Economic Ratio	-1.852	1.22	-3.689	4.37*
V5: Time	-1.719	5.01*	-.112	.59
V6: Pretest	1.389	6.00*	.704	5.47*
Constant	-2.075		2.388	
R^2	.384		.268	

* Significant at the .01 level.

the teaching procedure), sex, age, socio-economic ratio, time, and pretest, respectively.

As can be seen in the table, the experimental treatment (variable one) has a significant critical value, and produced an increase of 2.6 units of score controlling for, or holding constant, the effects of the other variables.

Notice, as well, the time to finish the pretest passage (variable five) has the expected sign and is significant. Holding other variables constant (including the treatment), the more slowly subjects read, the lower they scored on this posttest. It may be that slower readers are those most dependent on phonetic analysis, and faster readers are those employing to some degree context, syntax, configuration, and initial consonants. In effect the faster readers may be making the natural transition to mature fluent reading.

Similarly, higher pretest scores (holding all other variables constant) were associated with higher posttest scores. Each pretest item answered correctly was associated with a gain of 1.4 masked items. The pretest score (variable six) can be seen to be significant.

As would be expected sex (variable two) was not significant. Age (variable three) had the expected sign, the older the subjects, the higher they scored, but the t value was not significant. Likewise, socio-economic ratio (variable four) had the expected sign, the greater the percentage of Federal Lunch Program Recipients in the class, the lower the masked posttest score, but the t value was not significant.

Taking all variables into account the R square indicates that 38 percent of the variation is due to regression. It may be that inclusion of other variables such as scores of intelligence testing and scores of a standardized reading test would have produced increased insight into this phenomenon.

Regression II shows the estimated regression relationship between the comprehension posttest and the six variables. Variables two, three, and five (sex, age, and time, respectively), while having the expected signs, were not significant.

As can be seen in Table 3, the treatment (variable one) is significant in predicting comprehension posttest score. While the experimental treatment was more directly related to the masked posttest, the insights gained in use of context, syntax, configuration, and initial letter clues contributed significantly to passage comprehension.

As in Regression I, socio-economic ratio (variable four) has the expected negative sign; the greater the percentage of free lunch recipients, the lower the posttest score. In Regression II the t value (4.37) is significant. Similarly, an inverse relationship was found between pretest scores and the socio-economic index.

High scores on the comprehension posttest, while dependent on correct replacement of the masked items in the passage, may be seen as related to understanding of the unmasked portions (80%) of the passage, past experience with the subject matter, and related to skills applying to the pretest. As would be expected the pretest (variable six) produced a significant t

score of 5.47, substantially greater than the critical value of 2.63, holding the other variables constant.

Taking all variables into account the R square indicates that 27% of the variation is due to regression.

Based on Table 3 it is reasonable to conclude that inclusion in the treatment group raised posttest scores on the average by a predictable amount (2.6 masked items or .8 comprehension questions). High scores on the pretest indicate higher posttest scores (1.4 masked items and .7 comprehension questions on the average) regardless of treatment group. Slower reading rate decreases (1.7 items on the average) masked scores only. Low socio-economic status decreases (3.7 on the average) comprehension scores.

It has been observed that readers with better comprehension skills and greater speed in reading perform well on masked exercises independent of the experimental treatment indicating that a natural transition to fluent reading (as defined in this study) may occur at or before the age involved (eight to ten years). Nevertheless, all the students, both lows and highs, enjoyed increased word attack skill and comprehension abilities when exposed to treatment. On the average, exposure to the experimental treatment increased masked posttest scores 24% and comprehension posttest scores 16%.

Findings

The findings of this study are as follows:

1. Subjects receiving the experimental treatment showed significantly higher mean scores than those in the no treatment

group on both the masked and comprehension posttests.

2. Subjects with greater reading speed showed significantly higher means than those with slower reading rates on the masked posttest (word replacement).

3. The pretest was observed to have significant predictive value on both posttests.

4. Older subjects were observed to have somewhat higher scores on the masked posttest, though not to a significant degree. On the comprehension posttest no difference was observed.

5. Socio-economic ratio had a significant effect on comprehension posttest scores but not on masked posttest scores. Class groups with a high proportion of free lunch recipients did significantly poorer on the comprehension posttest.

6. There was no significant difference on the sex variable in any group.

The findings of this study are consistent with the main hypothesis. That is, practice in identifying and discussing context, syntax, and graphic clues increase word recognition and comprehension. It is clear that pupils who have not learned to use all the redundancies in written language can benefit from drill such as the masked exercise.

Possibilities for use of the masked technique have not been fully explored. As the technique is a modification of cloze with the addition of configuration and initial letter, it may be a useful tool in increasing reading speed. The masked exercise is easily and economically produced from available materials

by merely blocking out letters of every n^{th} word or every target word.

As the technique is designed to provide language insights to facilitate the transition to fluent reading, as well as increase word recognition and comprehension, it may be useful to study its effectiveness with remedial reading students.

While significant results were obtained in one 30 minute lesson, greater and lasting gains might be obtained in studies where drills are carried out over a longer duration.

The present study would have been enhanced had a measure on intelligence and scores on a standardized reading achievement test been included as variables. This is recommended for future studies. It would be useful to identify the factors (reading level, skills mastered, learning mode, etc.) which characterize the pupil most likely to benefit from masked exercise lessons.

To improve word attack skills and reading comprehension, and to ensure a transition from tedious word by word phonetic analysis to use of context, syntax, and configuration characteristic of mature fluent readers, it is recommended that masked exercises with discussion be used as a teaching or research device.

Appendix A

Instruments

Pretest

About two hundred years ago, the first big balloon was made. It was made in France by two brothers. It was a hot air balloon. The men who made the balloon wanted some animals to try it out. They put a sheep, a rooster, and a duck in the balloon and sent the balloon into the air. Soon it came down. The balloon ride had not hurt the animals.

Soon afterward a man went up in a balloon. Then larger balloons were made. They stayed in the air for a longer time. All this happened a long time before we had airplanes.

Time _____

1. The first balloon was made
   A. last year
   B. 2000 years ago
   C. 200 years ago
   D. 20 years ago

2. Three animals were put
   A. in the balloon
   B. in an airplane
   C. in some water
   D. in a cart

3. The animals were sent into the air
   A. To teach them to fly
   B. to hurt them
   C. to get rid of them
   D. to test the balloon

4. A man went up in the balloon
   A. before the animals went up
   B. soon after the animals went up

5. Airplanes were made
   A. before balloons were made
   B. after balloons were made
   C. by the man who made the balloon
   D. out of balloons
6. The animals
   A. died in the crash
   B. got hurt
   C. got food
   D. were not hurt
   C. along with the animals
   D. to take care of the animals
8. The balloon came down
   A. in a month
   B. in a year
   C. very soon
   D. never

Experimental Treatment Masked Drill Exercise

A. Context
   1. Use the [redacted] to unlock the door.
   2. He dived into our [redacted].
   3. They marched all in a line, just like a [redacted].
   4. Mr. Green lives next door, so he is my n[redacted].
   5. Don't eat all the candy, l[redacted] some for later.

B. Syntax
   1. "Look at the boy," s[redacted] John.
   2. Buy [redacted] or four more.
   3. She was a good runner [redacted] she lost the race.
   4. I called Mary but s[redacted] wasn't home.
   5. He [redacted] the ball.

C. Configuration

1. The [redacted] rang.
2. The [redacted] were still in the barn.
3. We returned from our trip in the [redacted].
4. My friends r[redacted] to school.
5. I live in the w[redacted] house.

Sample discussion question:

What do you think the hidden word is?

When your word is in the sentence, what does the sentence mean?

Does that make sense?

In part A also ask What clue is in the sentence?

In part B also ask Does the sentence need a doing word, a person place or thing word, a modifier, or a phrase marker?

Posttest

How w[redacted] you like to talk w[redacted] a friend many miles a[redacted] without using a telephone? [redacted] in Africa can do [redacted]. They use drums. They [redacted] the drum fast or s[redacted]. They change the sound of the drumbeats by using [redacted] and small drums. In [redacted] way they can say a[redacted] they wish. They can s[redacted] good news. They can [redacted] others where they are. [redacted] can tell about danger a[redacted] ask for help. A large [redacted] will send news more [redacted] forty miles. Then another [redacted] sends the news to o[redacted] further away. News travels [redacted] in this way.

1. In this story drums are used for
   A. sending news
   B. playing in a band
   C. finding animals
   D. traveling
2. People use large and small drums so they can
   A. make beautiful music
   B. keep others from hearing
   C. keep the drummers from getting tired
   D. change the sound of the drumbeats
3. Another drummer is used
   A. to send news farther
   B. to send news faster
   C. to keep the first drummer from getting tired
   D. to guard the drums
4. Drum "telephones" are used in
   A. Asia
   B. Africa
   C. South America
   D. England
5. Because the drummers can make different sounds with drums
   A. they can say only one thing
   B. they can't send news fast
   C. they can't send news very far
   D. they can say anything they want to
6. A large drum can be heard
   A. 4 miles away
   B. 40 miles away
   C. 400 miles away
   D. 40 feet away
7. They use drums because
   A. they cannot talk
   B. they live near their friends
   C. they live far apart
   D. they like noise
8. To send a message the drummer must
   A. use a stick
   B. beat very fast
   C. beat very slow
   D. beat fast and slow

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